

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented): An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming apparatus main body; and

a plurality of functional units, of which each is composed of a combination of a plurality of components and has a certain image-forming capability, the plurality of functional units being attachable to and detachable from the image forming apparatus main body in a predetermined order,

each of the functional units having attachment/detachment order controlling means for preventing the other functional unit from being attached and detached in an order different from the predetermined order.

2. (Original): An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming apparatus main body;

a process frame body including at least a photoconductive body, image forming means for forming an electrostatic latent image on a surface of the photoconductive body, and a frame mainbody for holding the photoconductive body and the image forming means; and

a development device including at least development means for developing the electrostatic latent image using toner, toner supply means for feeding toner to the development means, and

a development device main body for holding the development means and the toner supply means, the process frame body and the development device being attachable to and detachable from the image forming apparatus main body in a predetermined order, the process frame body and the development device each having attachment/detachment order controlling means for preventing the process frame body and the development device from being attached and detached in an order different from the predetermined order.

3. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the attachment/detachment order controlling means is created by forming part of each of the process frame body and the development device into a certain shape.

4. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the attachment/detachment order controlling means is built as an engagement portion which is, in the attachment of the process frame body and the development device, brought into engagement state in association with attachment operation of the component to be attached subsequently, and is, in the detachment of the process frame body and the development device, brought into disengagement state in association with detachment operation of the component to be detached first.

5. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 4, wherein, of the engagement portions respectively provided in the process frame body and the development device, one is formed as a convexity and another is formed as a concavity whose configuration conforms to that of the convexity.

6. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein, in cases where the order of attachment of the process frame body and development device is such that first the process frame body is attached and then the development device is attached, the attachment/detachment order controlling means of the process frame body is formed of a guide portion for guiding the attachment of the development device,

whereas the attachment/detachment order controlling means of the development device is formed of a to-be-guided portion which is guided by the guide portion.

7. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the process frame body further comprises frame securing means which is, in attachment operation, fitted to a certain portion of the apparatus main body to secure the process frame body, and releases, in detachment operation, the fitting to the certain portion by user's operation, and

wherein, in cases where the order in which the process frame body and the development device are detached is that first comes the development device, then the process frame body, the attachment/detachment order controlling means of the development device has an inhibitory portion for inhibiting operation of the frame securing means by users, when the process frame body and the development device are attached.

8. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 7, wherein, in the attachment of the process frame body and the development device, the inhibitory portion covers the frame securing means in association with the attachment operation of the component to be attached subsequently; and meanwhile, in the detachment of the process frame body and the development device, the inhibitory portion releases the frame securing means in association with the detachment operation of the development device.

9. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the development device further comprises pressure-contact means for contacting under pressure or separating the photoconductive body and the development means by user's operation, when the process frame body and the development device are attached.

10. (Original): The image forming apparatus of claim 9,

wherein the toner supply means is made attachable to and detachable from the development device main body, and

wherein the pressure-contact means acts to contact under pressure or separate the photoconductive body and the development means in accordance with the attachment and detachment of the toner supply means to and from the development device.

11. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming apparatus main body including an opening for receiving first and second functional units;

a first functional unit having an image forming capability received in said opening and having a guide structure and a release mechanism for releasing said first functional unit from said opening;

a second functional unit received in said opening and comprising a guide element received in said guide structure and a first portion;

wherein said first portion is configured to cover said release mechanism when said first functional unit and said second functional unit are properly installed in said opening and to prevent said first functional unit from being installed in said opening after said second functional unit is installed in said opening;

whereby said first functional unit and said second functional unit may only be installed and removed in a predetermined order.

12. (New) The image forming apparatus of claim 11 wherein said first functional unit comprises a process frame body and said second functional unit comprises a development device.

13. (New) The image forming device of claim 12 wherein said guide structure comprises a groove and said guide element comprises a rod receivable in said groove.